

**MAY 27, 2005**

**SCHAKOWSKY: REMEMBER THE FALLEN AND SUPPORT OUR SOLDIERS**

**CALLS FOR IMPROVED HEALTH CARE, FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SOLDIERS AND VETERANS**

**WASHINGTON, DC -- US Representative Jan Schakowsky released a statement today calling for a renewed commitment to soldiers and veterans as we pause to remember the fallen.**

**The full text of Representative Schakowsky's statement is below:**

**"This Memorial Day, we honor the service of America's soldiers and veterans. Even as we remember the fallen, we must renew our commitment to support our soldiers and veterans.**

**As we memorialize those who gave their lives for our country, we think of our soldiers risking their lives today in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a small token of our appreciation, the House of Representatives voted this week to raise the death benefit for soldiers to \$100,000. But we can and must do more.**

**Soldiers, veterans, and their families deserve more than rhetoric on Memorial Day - they deserve results. The President and his friends in Congress have made empty promises to veterans while slashing VA benefits and increasing health care costs. Just this week the Republicans blocked a motion that would provide health care benefits to national guardsmen, reservists, and their families. It's time to provide our soldiers with a new GI Bill of Rights that will improve health care benefits and services, end the disabled veterans tax and the military families tax, provide support to homeless veterans, and provide bonuses and special pay for the permanently injured.**

**I will fight to ensure that Illinois never again ranks last in disability payments to veterans. And I will continue to fight to provide soldiers, veterans, and their families with the health care and financial support that they deserve for serving our nation."**

**Representative Schakowsky is a co-sponsor of the following two bills critical to veterans this year:**

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**The New GI Bill of Rights for the 21st Century:**

**Representative Schakowsky is an original co-sponsor of H.R. 2131, the New GI Bill of Rights for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act, which would provide improved health care, benefits, and services to veterans and active troops. The GI Bill would curb the costs of health care and improve benefits for veterans, expand health care to members of the National Guard and Reservists, end the military families tax, enhance education and job training programs for veterans, and provide bonuses and special pay for the permanently injured. Additionally, it would end the disabled veterans tax, which forces veterans to give up a dollar of retirement pay for each dollar they receive in compensation for a service-connected disability, and the military families tax.**

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**The Assured Funding for Veterans' Health Care Act:**

**Representative Schakowsky is an original co-sponsor of H.R. 515, the Assured Funding for Veterans' Health Care Act, which would make funding for VA health care mandatory, and ensure that the allocated funding is used solely to provide or support health benefits and services.**